INTERNAL EXPERIMENTS in FINLAND

Successful Operation of Two Services During the Summer Months : Tourist Plans for the Winter

This aerial view of Hämeenlinna, which lies on the Helsinski-Tampere route, gives a good idea of the sort of country which is flown over by the Aero O/Y internal services. Two of these were experimentally operated during the summer.

THERE is a curious resemblance between our own and the Finnish air transport arrangements. In each case the Government subsidy —very small in Finland's budget—has been devoted to the development of international air services, which were started as long ago as 1923, while the internal system has been left to run as well as it could. The differences are that Finland's internal services are run by the one national company, Aero O/Y, and have been in operation only since the beginning of this summer.

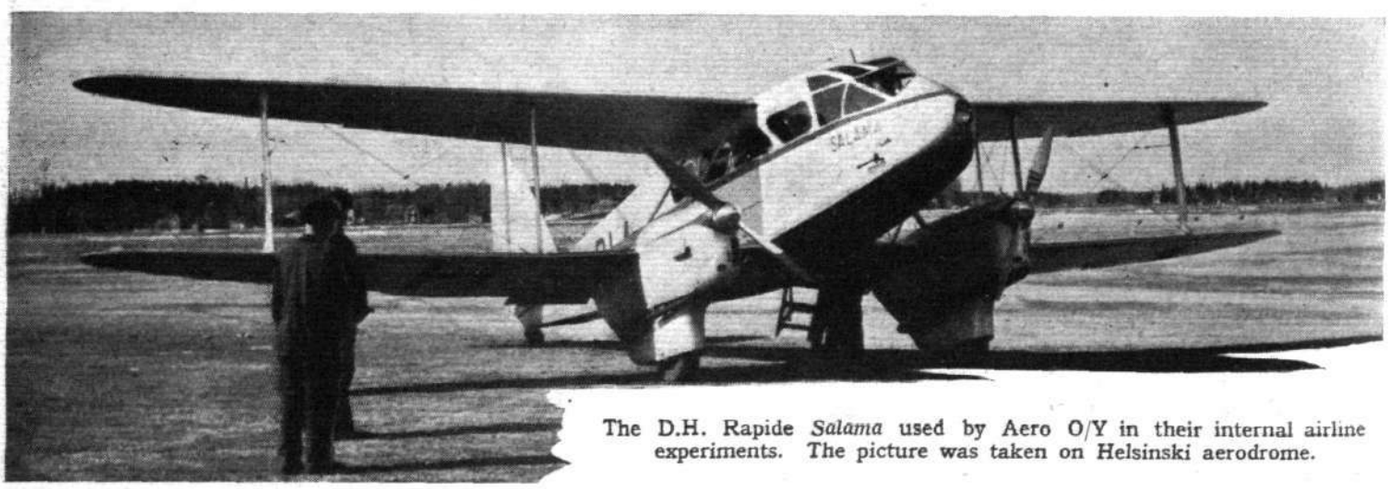
Although these services were planned in 1926, their development has only been possible since aerodromes were laid out. The whole scheme has, in fact, been operated concurrently with the change-over from the floatplanes, which have been previously used on all the Finnish services and which necessitated their abandonment during the winter period. Needless to say, the fact that no subsidy was available meant that the company had to look out for a type of machine which could be made to pay for itself, and it was almost inevitable that in their search for a suitable type they should turn to the one other European country where unsubsidised services were also being run. A D.H. Rapide was purchased, and this is now being fitted with skis (developed by the Canadian D.H. Company) for experimental winter flying to the resorts in the north where frozen lakes will be used. More aerodromes are in course of preparation for these holiday services. It will then be possible for the resorts to be visited comfortably during a week-end.

By way of an initial experiment, Aero O/Y opened Helsinski-Tampere and Helsinski-Viipuri services on May 1 this year, and carried on with a regularity of 99.3 per cent. A total of 687 paying passengers were carried on the first-named service and 745 on the second-named, giving load-capacity percentages of 56.1 and 60.3 per cent.—figures which can be considered as being extremely good for the first few months of operation. The comparative popularity of the services is partly explained by the fact that they enabled passengers to get through to Berlin in a day; more than half the number of passengers were business men.

Civil aerodromes have now been laid out at Helsinski, Turku, Tampere, Vaasa, Oulu and Joensu, while the military aerodrome is temporarily used at Viipuri; D/F facilities are available at Helsinski, Viipuri, Tampere and Turku, and the Rapide carried an operator and made good use of them. As far as the tourist services are concerned, aerodrome sites have been inspected at Rovaniemi, Sodankylä, Ivalo and Petsamo.

Aero O/Y have, in fact, recently applied to the Minister of Communications and Transport for permission to organise such a service to Petsamo, which is Finland's Arctic seaport. A small fishing village, its importance may be considerably increased if the proposal becomes an actuality.

Needless to say, the experimental services have not quite paid for themselves, but the company hopes that the considerable success achieved will help to convince the Government of the need for internal as well as external subsidies.



The D.H. Rapide *Salama* used by Aero O/Y in their internal airline experiments. The picture was taken on Helsinski aerodrome.

The Broader Outlook

THE Straight Corporation, feeling that two years on a provincial airport hardly fits an apprentice to handle the broader issues which may arise as he climbs in his profession, has sent its nine fledgelings from Ramsgate, Ipswich, Exeter and Plymouth on a three-days' tour of factories. To demonstrate contrasting methods in both the motor and the aircraft industry, they were conducted round the Ford works at Dagenham, Rolls-Royce's at Derby, De Havilland's at Hatfield, and the Bristol Aeroplane Co. at Bristol. Four members of the staff of the central office in London accompanied the party.